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Obey APPLAUDS FIRST INCREASE OF federal Minimum Wage In A DECADE

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) today applauded the first increase of the federal minimum wage in a decade. As the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Obey was a leader in the effort to pass the minimum wage increase earlier this year.

“When an average CEO earns more before lunchtime in one day than a minimum wage

worker earns all year, you know there's something wrong," Obey said. "So I'm glad that beginning today, millions of Americans earning the minimum wage will bring home a bigger paycheck to help them keep up with the rising cost of living and give them a renewed sense of dignity for their hard work."

"Nobody who works forty hours a week ought to go home at the end of that week still in poverty. And it's a disgrace that some do, thanks in part to the fact that the minimum wage is so low," Obey added, noting that before today's increase, the purchasing power of the minimum wage was at its lowest level since 1955

Today's increase from \$5.15 to \$5.85 per hour ends the longest span without a federal minimum wage increase since the pay floor was established nearly seventy years ago. The federal minimum wage will continue to rise incrementally over the next two years until it reaches \$7.25 per hour. The Wisconsin state minimum wage is currently \$6.50 an hour.

Raising the federal minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 per hour will result in an additional \$4,400 per year for a minimum wage worker, roughly equivalent to 15 months of groceries, 19 months of utilities or 20 months of child care for a family of three. Nearly 13 million Americans will benefit from that increase – over five million directly and over seven million indirectly.

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